1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

851 upon the age class trotted toward Patkwę'i's house, humming "like humming
846 birds," and there a whole meat pie was distributed among them. Meanwhile Patkwę'i's husband had also abandoned the partitioned space of seclusion, put on his earplugs once more, and had himself painted with urucú. When the rópkam still humming as before, ran back, one of the oldest Indians came to meet them dancing, howling like a steppe fox, and bashfully slinking from one side to another. As a steppe fox always visits an abandoned camp site in search of food remnants, so the old man was looking for the residue at Patkwę'i's house.

A ceremony of such complexity, however, takes place only when the first child is born. On the same day another woman, who had already given birth to a number of children, was discharged from her retreat. All she did was to send a meat pie via her brother to the council assembled in the plaza.

851 When Kapẽrtụk's wife had been delivered of a little girl, his sister, Mĩkwę'i,
[551] took her in her arms and carried her to the aunt's matrilineal home, thereby indicating that she would transfer her names to the infant. Then Kapẽrtụk's and
846 Mĩkwę'i's maternal uncle went to hunt a deer, which he turned over to his niece. The meat she prepared was partaken of by all the inmates of the matrilineal home of Kapẽrtụk's wife, except herself and her husband. Unprepared slices of this game must not be distributed in other dwellings lest the hunter lose his luck, growing lazy and sleepy (čukaká). For the same reason he must not throw his booty on the floor when he gets home, but must deposit it with caution.

[825] After his seclusion an infant's father goes on a hunting trip in order to kill an anteater of the smaller species (*Myrmecophaga tetradactyla*), which is said to "rear its children like a human being" by carrying them around on its back.

852 As soon as the child has its change of hair, the furrow is cut round its head.

604 Not until the close of seclusion does the mother indulge in domestic chores, and even then only in part because during the first months she hardly lets go of her infant. In leaving the house she turns it over to her own mother or another female housemate. A little girl is likely to spend considerable time at a paternal aunt's—even if she should not be the one from whom she acquires her names. This bond between little girls and their paternal aunts often is of great intimacy, being even more striking than the corresponding tie between a boy and his maternal uncle, which manifests itself later and especially in ceremonial. This uncle certainly pays no attention to a nursling's care.

853 So long as the mother maintains continence, the child is supposed to grow apace.
856 For this reason many women abstain from marital congress for months, allowing the hair around their temples to grow, but immediately clipping it after the first postnatal cohabitation. This obligatory continence is by no means to every husband's taste, and a fantastic tale of suicide—relegated, it is true, to the days of
[762] long ago—is told. On the plea that their child was still too small a woman denied her husband access for many months. He had himself, as well as the nephew to whom he had transferred his names, decorated and took the boy into the steppe. There he pretended to hunt falcons, kindled a fire around himself and the boy, causing both to perish.

INFANCY

853 The nursing period lasts about two years. The mother gives suck as often as the child desires it, kinswomen being glad to help so far as they are able. The mother teaches her child to eat cooked food by chewing it and then placing it in the infant's mouth.

854 As soon as the child is able to sit, the mother carries it straddling her left hip

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

841 853 171 about frequently married eight-year-old girls, refers not to the Timbira, but to the Southern Kayapó.

How the native theory of defloration as prerequisite to menstruation could persist is a complete enigma; and its occurrence in identical form among Eastern and Western Timbira proves that the idea is not an innovation. I myself took cognizance of its existence relatively late. An accurate determination of the facts encounters difficulty, not because of Indian prudery, but because the natives could never grasp that I was interested solely in the objective facts: they always supposed that I was taking a personal interest in the girl I asked about. That I was inquiring about two or three girls was also intelligible, though my simultaneously concerning myself with all of them seemed a bit odd. I left the puzzle unsolved.

[123]

881 841 585 No special measures are taken at puberty, the procedure remaining uniform for the first and for subsequent menstrual periods. Since defloration and menstruation are equated, the diet is the same in both cases, but in the former it extends to both spouses, who for several days abstain from heavy dishes lest their hair turn gray prematurely. Meat, manioc paste, and manioc flour are taboo, while nowadays rice is reckoned most suitable.

841 Formerly a menstruating female is said to have worn a hip cord of burity bast dyed red, a badge that had completely fallen into desuetude at the time of my stay. She goes bathing as usual, but wears no decoration and does not appear in the plaza, least of all for dancing. In fact, she does not without necessity leave the house, where she is seated on a special mat of paty palm leaves. She must, above all, refrain from looking at the plantation in order not to injure the growth of the crops. She drinks from a special water bottle, but may prepare food for others as well as herself. The use of a scratching-stick is prescribed. It is usually a span in length and consists of a rod of paty leafstalk or any handy little stick as a substitute; the scratcher is usually stuck into the thatch of the wall beside the bed.

[412]

No man knowingly has relations with a menstruating woman lest he be afflicted with a headache so violent as to drive him mad. If he recognizes the woman's condition too late, he immediately prepares an infusion of cedar bark, sets it outdoors overnight, and drinks it the next morning.

[757]

836 627 596 Though premarital defloration has become the rule as it were, the girl's relatives still demand an indemnity unless marriage follows. Usually there is a family council, embracing the mother, her brothers and sisters, the girl's elder brother if old enough, and the paternal aunt. After a cross-questioning of the girl in order to ascertain the facts, the mother's brother betakes himself to the culprit's family and with the utmost calm and prolixity propounds the claim for indemnification. He rarely receives an immediate reply, for the Timbira are generally extremely slow in reaching a decision. There ensues a discussion by the culprit's family, possibly repeated at intervals of weeks, so that the affair is drawn out over months, sometimes dying of inanition—if for no other reason, because in the meantime the girl has had over-ample time to dispose of her person. In some cases, however, the uncle takes a more determined stand and lays siege to the opposing party till they indemnify the others with a gun or such ironware as a pot, a bush-knife, or an ax, the maternal uncle receiving the lion's share. This, at least, is the contemporary procedure. Anciently, it is said (and confirmed by Pohl), premarital defloration was virtually nonexistent.

833 171 Like the Apinayé and the Šerénte, the Ramkõ'kamekra cohabit both in dorsal and in semilateral feminine position; in the latter case, posteriorly below the woman's raised thigh.